

January 3, 2011

KENTUCKY: This past December can best be described as cold with below normal temperatures reported along with below normal precipitation. The average temperature for the month was the 5th coldest December on record. Most every day lows were below the freezing mark, with several days staying below the freezing mark for highs. Snowfall started early in the month, with Frankfort having received 5 inches the first week of the month. Intermittent light to moderate snowfall continued thru the month, with some locations getting ice on a couple occasions. For much of the month many locations, especially north and east, had snow or ice accumulations on the ground. It was only after the light snowfall around the 25th that snow began to melt away.

Temperatures for the period averaged 28.4 degrees across the state which was 8.8 degrees cooler than normal and 16 degrees cooler than the previous period. High temperatures averaged from 38.8 in the West to 35.0 in the East. Departure from normal high temperatures ranged from 8.3 degrees cooler than normal in the West to 12.7 degrees cooler than normal in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 21.4 degrees in the West to 21.7 degrees in the East. Departure from normal low temperature ranged from 7.7 degrees cooler than normal in the West to 5.3 degrees cooler than normal in the East. The extreme high temperature for the period was 68.5 degrees at Cumberland County and the extreme low was -5.3 degrees at Madison County.

Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 3.13 inches statewide which was 1.1 inches below normal and 74.0% of normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 2.82 inches, Central 3.51 inches, Bluegrass 2.58 inches and East 3.61 inches, which was 1.77, 1.08, 1.12 and 0.44 inches below normal. By station, precipitation totals ranged from a low of 1.90 inches at Lewis County to a high of 5.12 inches at Calloway County.

Tobacco producers continued to strip their burley as December rains made conditions favorable. Farmers were kept busy feeding and caring for their livestock as extended periods of cold weather caused stress to animals. Wet weather improved soil moisture conditions which was beneficial for fall seeded small grain growth.